

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Withdrawn) A composition for increasing a body height of an individual, comprising a guanylyl cyclase B (GC-B) activator as an active ingredient, the composition being to be administered to an individual free from FGFR3 abnormality.

2. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 1, for use in a patient with short stature.

3. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 1, for use in an individual other than patients with short stature.

4. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 1, wherein the increase in body height is extension of cartilage bones.

5. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 1, wherein the increase in body height is extension of femora, tibiae, radiuses, and/or ulnae.

6. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 1, wherein the activator is a peptide.

7. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 6, wherein the peptide is type C natriuretic peptide (CNP) or a derivative thereof.

8. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 7, wherein the CNP is CNP-22 or CNP-53 from mammals including human, or birds.

9. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 7, wherein the CNP is CNP-22 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or CNP-53 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

10. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 7, wherein the derivative has a deletion, substitution or addition of one or several amino acids in the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or 2, while possessing a CNP activity.

11. **(Currently Amended)** A method for increasing the body height of an individual free from fibroblast growth factor receptor 3 (FGFR3) abnormality, comprising administering systemically C-type natriuretic peptide (CNP) or a derivative thereof to increase the body height in the individual,

wherein the individual has growth cartilage layers,

wherein the CNP is CNP-22 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or CNP-53 of SEQ ID NO: 2,

wherein the derivative is selected from the group consisting of: CNP derivatives set forth as SEQ ID NOS: 3 to 10; and CNP derivatives which are obtained from the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 ~~by substituting the 32-53 amino acids thereof by any of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOS: 3 to 10~~ by substituting residues 32-53 of SEQ ID NO: 2 with any of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOS: 3 to 10, wherein the CNP derivatives possess a CNP activity.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the increase in body height is extension of cartilage bones.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the increase in body height is extension of femora, tibiae, radiuses, or ulnae.

14-15. (Cancelled).

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the CNP or the derivative thereof is CNP-22 of SEQ ID NO:1 or CNP-53 of SEQ ID NO:2.

17. (Cancelled).

18. (Withdrawn) A method for screening an agent for increasing the body height of an individual, comprising screening candidate agents for an agent for increasing the body height using the activity of GC-B as an indication.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, which comprises preparing cultured cells that express GC-B or cells from articular chondrocytes, culturing the cells in the presence of a candidate agent, and screening candidate agents for an agent for increasing the body height of an individual using the activity of GC-B in the cells as an indication.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein the activity of GC-B is determined as an amount of produced intracellular cGMP.

21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein it comprises preparing a cultured cell line that has been forced to express GC-B, culturing the cell line in the presence or absence of a test substance, determining an amount of intracellular cGMP produced in the cell line, and screening candidate agents for an agent for increasing body heights using the difference, as an indication, in amounts of intracellular cGMP produced in the presence and absence of the test substance.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for extending a cartilage bone free from FGFR3 abnormality in an individual, comprising administering systemically C-type natriuretic peptide (CNP) or a derivative thereof to activate guanyl cyclase B (GC-B) in the individual,
wherein the individual has growth cartilage layers,
wherein the CNP is CNP-22 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or CNP-53 of SEQ ID NO: 2,
wherein the derivative is selected from the group consisting of: CNP derivatives set forth as SEQ ID NOS: 3 to 10; and CNP derivatives which are obtained from the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2-by-substituting the 32-53-amino acids thereof by any of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOS: 3 to 10 by substituting residues 32-53 of SEQ ID NO: 2 with any of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOS: 3 to 10, wherein the CNP derivatives possess a CNP activity.

23. (Cancelled).